



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS REMEMBERS ITS FALLEN, URGES SAFETY AT ANNUAL WORKERS' MEMORIAL EVENT

LOS ANGELES – California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) employees, family members and guests took a moment to recognize and remember District 7 workers killed in the line of duty at its annual Workers Memorial event.

Statewide, Caltrans has lost 188 employees since 1921; 37 of those employees worked in District 7, which covers Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, highway construction and maintenance work is one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States. Nationally, drivers and passengers account for 85 percent of the people who are killed in highway work zones. These numbers don't include the close calls highway workers experience every day.

"Workers Memorial is a time to honor those who lost their lives building, maintaining, and operating one of California's most valuable assets, its transportation system," said Caltrans District 7 Director Carrie Bowen. "Highway worker safety is everyone's responsibility. I ask motorists that when they drive near a work zone and are running late for an appointment or decide to take their eyes off the road for a second, these actions can have tragic consequences. Be patient. Don't speed. Be Work Zone Alert."

Caltrans is committed to providing safe and efficient work zones, both for the traveling public and employees working on the state highway system. The mission, vision, and goals for the Department place safety highest among its commitments.

"Remembering our fallen coworkers is a sober reminder that we must continually recommit ourselves to safety every day," said Caltrans Director Laurie Berman. "I would like to appeal to those who use our travel-way, if you speed, text, drive impaired, distracted or aggressively, you are putting your life at risk and you are putting others in serious danger."

With funding from Senate Bill 1, Caltrans will invest \$54 billion in state highway and local roads across the state over the next decade. SB 1 will upgrade 7,700 traffic operating systems and fix over 17,000 miles of pavement, 500 bridges and 55,000 culverts or drains. That means that motorists will encounter even more highway work zones and must stay alert for construction and maintenance workers and equipment.

Drivers can dramatically improve safety in work zones by slowing down, avoiding texting and talking on the phone, and complying with the Move Over law, which requires motorists to move over if it is safe to do so or slow down when approaching vehicles displaying flashing amber warning lights, including Caltrans vehicles.



BE WORK ZONE ALERT

